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the metal is hot. Some knife and meat hook handles terminate in spiral antennae (Figs. 1, f; 5, g). Iron is never inlaid with other metals. 325 [531]

There are very few Tanala silversmiths, most of their ornaments being bought from the Betsileo. The ornaments are usually made from French five franc pieces and, at the time of my visit, the government had prohibited silver working as part of a campaign to introduce paper money. Because of this, the silversmiths carried on their work surreptitiously and I could learn nothing of their methods. 326 177

WOOD WORKING

With the exception of the Zafimaniry gens, the Tanala are rather inferior wood workers. Their tools consist of the axe, chisel, knife, plane, drill, and two types of gouge. Adzes are unknown and saws were unknown until introduced by Europeans. They are still rarely used. 322 412

The axe (*antsi*) is used both as a tool and as a weapon. All native men carry one when traveling. The blade is shaped like that of an American cleaver, flat, with a square end and a straight or slightly curved cutting edge 4 to 6 inches long (Fig. 10, d). It has a straight, horizontal tang about 3 inches long which is inserted in a straight wooden handle 18 inches to 2 feet long and about 1 inch in diameter. In mounting the blade the tang is heated red hot and used to burn a hole of the proper size in the end of the handle. When this is deep enough the tang is fixed in it with a strong vegetable cement, made from a berry. The handle is then reinforced about the tang with a metal ferrule or a band of rawhide taken from a cow's tail and slipped on wet.

Chisels are of solid iron and are shaped much like our own cold chisels. They are used for fine work in hollowing wooden utensils and in dressing joints in timbers (Fig. 10, f).

Planes are shaped much like the small planes used by our own carpenters (Fig. 11, f). The plane-iron tapers to a point, which is usually recurved. It is held in place by a wooden wedge. The Zafimaniry often use plane-irons with a fluted edge (Fig. 11, e), producing a corrugated surface. Planes are used for dressing house timbers and the outside of large wooden utensils, especially boxes.

Drills are identical with those already described under Fire Making except that they are fitted with chisel-shaped iron bits. They are rarely used in wood working, small perforations usually being made with a hot iron.

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322 412 Large, heavy gouges are used for hollowing out large boxes and canoes. The blade is provided with a socket by which it is fitted on the end of a heavy, straight wooden handle, like a spade handle. This gouge is swung with both hands, like the native spade. The head of the gouge is usually carried in a rawhide sheath (Fig. 11, c). Small gouges with curved blades are used for hollowing out spoons and other small utensils (Fig. 10, g). They are sometimes provided with a long handle which is gripped in the arm pit so that the blade is held rigid while the utensil is pressed and turned against it.

All wood working tools are sharpened with whetstones, which are carried on the belt in a hide sheath (Fig. 10, h).

313 The greater part of the Tanala territory is heavily forested, but because of their wasteful agricultural methods large timber is becoming scarce. It is often necessary to go several hours' march from a village to find trees suitable for making large utensils, canoes, and house timbers. In such cases the workmen build rude shelters at the place and live there until the work is finished.

It is considered wise to begin the felling of large trees on an auspicious day. It is not obligatory, but if this is neglected there may be accidents. If the trees selected are in a *zintana* ("place inhab- [192] ited by spirits") the workmen make a small sacrifice before the felling begins and warn the spirits to go away so that they will not be injured. The trees are felled with axes, never with fire, and are cut off 2 to 3 feet above the ground. The Tanala apparently make no use of wedges or other appliances for splitting the wood. Timbers, utensils, etc., are hewn out bodily and brought to nearly their final form on the spot, to save labor in transport. They are then carried to the village to be finished at leisure. The Tanala never work with seasoned wood if green wood is obtainable.

322 After objects have been roughed out with the axe and heavy gouge they are dressed with planes and knives. If a very smooth surface is desired, the object is gone over with a heavy iron rasp of European manufacture, and the surface then rubbed down with a slightly rough stone or with damp sand on a piece of hide. Final smoothing is done with leaves. Wooden utensils are never polished intentionally, although they may become glossy through use.

322 531 The Zafimaniry do a good deal of wood carving. Their carving tools are knives and small chisels and gouges (Fig. 10, j), used without mallets. There is no carving in the round. The designs are incised after the surface has been rubbed smooth. Oval wooden boxes, beds and the timbers and doors of houses are the objects most

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322 commonly decorated. The house carvings are made after the house
531 has been erected and the owner will work on them intermittently for years.

The other Tanala gentes carve very little. Some of the Menabe blacken the edges of wooden bowls and sections on the handles of wooden ladles by charring them with a hot iron and rubbing the surface smooth. Simple designs are then cut through the black layer into the underlying white wood (Fig. 7, d). Such decorations are very striking when the utensil is new, but soon disappear with use. A similar technique is used by the tribes of the southeast coast and those of the extreme south, and is also common in Africa. It seems to be a recent introduction among the Tanala.

The handles of wooden spoons are given ornamental shapes and are sometimes decorated with series of small incised circles. This form of decoration is much commoner on horn and bone and the method of making the circles is described in that section.

WORK IN HORN, BONE AND HIDE

321 Animal products are of little importance in Tanala industry. All
415 the horn, bone and hide used is obtained from cattle. Cow horns are occasionally used as containers for fire making sets (Fig. 5, e) and charms (Fig. 23, e). There are also a few horn snuff bottles (Fig. 9, j) and small horn boxes, used as snuff boxes or purses (Fig. 9, f). Only the Zafimaniry use horns as drinking and libation cups (Fig. 9, a, b). In all except the charms and drinking cups, the large end of the horn is closed by a carefully fitted wooden stopper, smoothly rounded on the outside. This stopper is held in place by small pins of horn or bone, cut off flush with the outer surface. Similar pins are sometimes used to fasten the bottoms of small wooden boxes.

321 None of my informants knew of any method for softening horn so that it could be twisted and spread, but the small horn boxes could not have been made in any other way. Probably the material was scraped thin and then softened by boiling. Ordinarily the horn is cut into shape with knives, scraped to remove the loose, fibrous surface, and then rubbed smooth with some abrasive. Lastly, it is oiled and polished. The final polishing is done with leaves which contain crystals of silica. Horn objects are nearly always well made and often show a fine, glossy finish.

Bone is used even less than horn. Snuff bottles are sometimes made from sections of long bones with wooden stoppers fixed in the

XI. ART

531 171 The art of the Malagasy, although nowhere very rich or varied, is pure art, in the sense that it is inspired entirely by aesthetic considerations. Aside from a few naturalistic carvings used as memorials to the dead, for magical purposes, or as decorations on containers for charms, their art products seem to have no religious or magical connotations. Even the Sihanaka, who have developed and named a variety of elaborate mat designs, claim that the purpose of such designs is purely decorative. In most tribes the designs are not named and no significance is attached to them.

Some tribes even go a step farther in aesthetic expression and make art objects which serve no utilitarian purpose. Thus the Sakalava manufacture small baskets of fantastic shapes, mats and fans embroidered with raffia, etc., which are never used, but which hang on the walls of the dwellings much like pictures in our own houses. The tribes of the far south take delight in elaborately decorated baskets and keep many empty ones standing on their shelves. The Sihanaka weave amusing figures of men and animals from papyrus and carve small paddles which the men carry as a part of full dress, like swagger sticks. The Bara even carve small images of men and animals which are pure bric-a-brac and take delight in deliberate caricatures, especially of unpopular white officials.

517 531 In contrast with these art loving tribes, the Tanala, with the single exception of the Zafimaniry gens, seem to have very little aesthetic sense. The little that they have expresses itself in good craftsmanship rather than decoration. Their houses, although well built and neatly kept, are severely plain. Their tools and utensils are simple in form and devoid of ornament. Cloth, where woven, is decorated with plain stripes and even their mats and baskets are, for the most part, undecorated. Only wood carving shows any development, and that only among the Zafimaniry.

322 531 Until about twenty years ago the only Tanala who did any wood carving were the Zafimaniry gens of the Menabe. Individuals in other gentes sometimes scratched zigzag lines on the handles of ladles and cut the handles of their spoons into ornamental outlines (Fig. 7, a, b) but such decoration was exceptional. In recent years there has been an increase in wood carving. At present there are a few semi-professional carvers among the Ikongo. These men have learned the art from the Bara. Their work consists for the most

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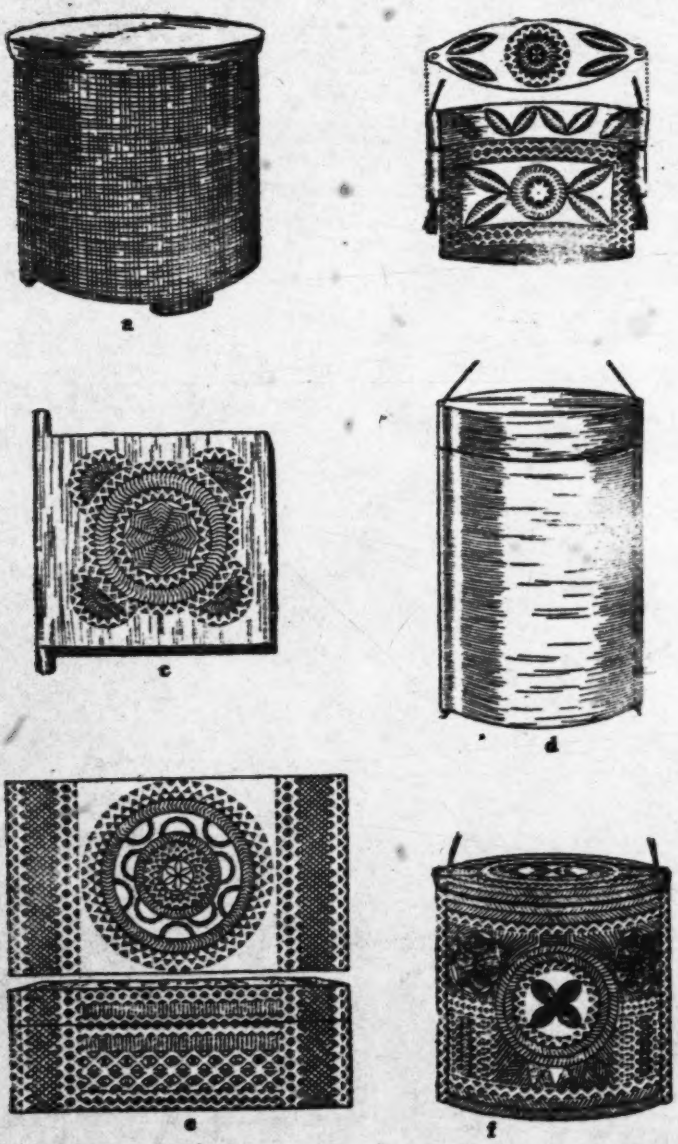

FIG. 22. Carved Boxes. a, Cross Stitched Box; b, Small Carved Box; c, Smoke Hole Shutter; d, Plain Wooden Box; e, Carved Oblong Box; f, Large Oval Box, Old.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

531 part, of small figurines of men and animals which are made for sale
322 to Europeans, and is indistinguishable from that of the Bara.

Among the Menabe, other than the Zafimaniry, there are no professional carvers. However, men who make large ladles for sale now decorate the handles of these with simple designs. The handle is first blackened for a few inches above the bowl. This may be done either by searing the wood with a red-hot iron and then rubbing the charred surface with a rag dipped in grease, or simply by rubbing with a mixture of grease and soot. The designs are then cut through this black layer, exposing the lighter wood beneath. They are large and very simple. They consist of bands, spots, etc., symmetrically arranged (Fig. 7, d). The carving is so shallow that when the black color has disappeared through use it is often difficult to tell whether the ladle has been decorated or not. I could not trace the origin of this type of decoration, but it is said to be a recent development. It may have been borrowed from either the Bara or the tribes of the southeast coast, both of whom use a similar technique. The ladle makers say that it increases the salability of their wares.

The Zafimaniry are excellent wood carvers and, in former times, decorated their houses, beds, and some of their wooden utensils with beautiful and rather complicated designs. At the present time wooden houses and the large enclosed beds (see Dwellings) are obsolete, but the
[439] carving of utensils is still common. Zafimaniry carvings are in demand with Europeans and civilized natives and they have recently begun to produce objects of new types, especially folding tables and purely ornamental boxes. The latter are rectangular, a shape unknown in ancient times (Figs. 32, e; 33, c; 34, a), or graceful modifications of the comb-topped type formerly used for tinder boxes (Fig. 33, a, b). At the time of my visit there was even a small factory at Ambositra, where several Zafimaniry carvers worked under the direction of the
[171] Imerina owner. The products of this factory were marketed in the capital. Although the carvings made for sale are technically inferior to the old work and rarely show the more complicated designs, there has been little European influence on the art itself. In over a hundred specimens which I examined I could not detect a single European motif.

322 The Zafimaniry say that their art of carving was already fully
173 developed when they entered the Tanala territory from the plateau.
531 However, they have certain stories in regard to its development which probably contain much truth. They say that, in the earliest times, they did not carve designs but decorated their wooden objects

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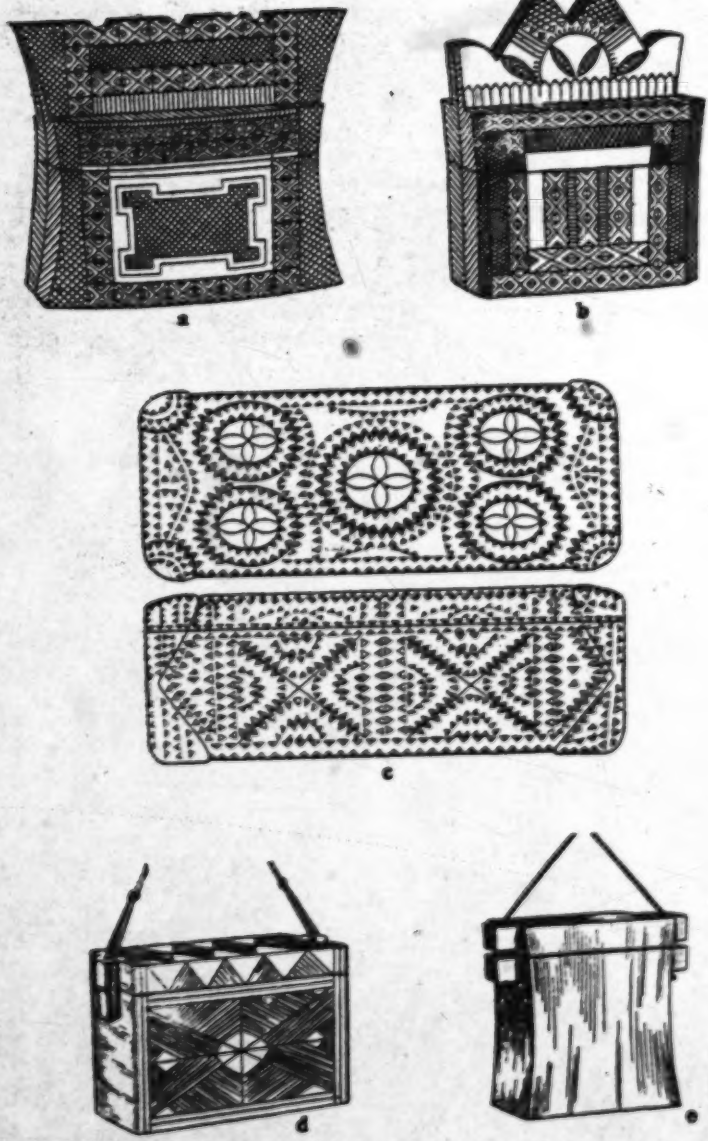

FIG. 33. Carved Boxes. a, b, c, Modern Carved Boxes; d, Old Carved Box; e, Flat, Rectangular Box.

1: Linton, E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

322 531 173 by means of a fluted plane (Fig. 11, e, f). This plane gave a series of shallow, parallel grooves. By changing the direction of the planing it was possible to produce cross hatching with the lines either diagonal or at right angles. The fluted plane decoration has only become obsolete in the last fifteen or twenty years. An example of it is shown in Fig. 32, a. The same effects are now produced with a very narrow gouge (Fig. 10, j). This is more laborious but gives much greater precision.

The earliest instrument used for carving designs was a small knife of the ordinary type (Fig. 1, f). At the present time this has been [177] almost completely replaced by small chisels, usually of European origin. Most of these are straight edged, but turners' chisels, with a slanting edge, are just beginning to come into use. Both chisels and gouges are used without a mallet. The tools are usually held and used in European fashion, but it seemed to me that the carvers worked toward their bodies rather more than white artisans would have done.

322 531 All the old Zafimaniry carvings are made on hard wood. Soft woods are now beginning to be used, but only for export pieces. The surface of the wood is never blackened. Before the carving begins, the surface is smoothed and given a dull polish. Commercial sandpaper is now used for this even in remote districts. The ancient carvers worked free hand, carrying the design in their minds, but at present practically all of them sketch in the designs in pencil. This is done to save time. Formerly, large circles and arcs were outlined with an iron point attached to a piece of cord while smaller ones were [177] carved free hand. At present, European compasses are in almost universal use.

The Zafimaniry do no carving in the round or even in modeled relief. The decoration follows the contour of the object exactly and the carving appears flat, due to a complete absence of curved surfaces. The designs are worked out by a combination of very shallow and moderately deep cuts with no intermediate levels. The shallow cuts are a sixteenth of an inch or less deep and are made with a gouge or the point of a knife. I saw only one instance in which the gouge had been used to outline a curve. Apparently the limitation of its use to straight lines is not due to lack of skill, for the carvers readily made curves with it on request, but to the fact that it is a substitute for the fluted plane. The latter could only be used for straight lines and the convention thus established has persisted. The knife is used

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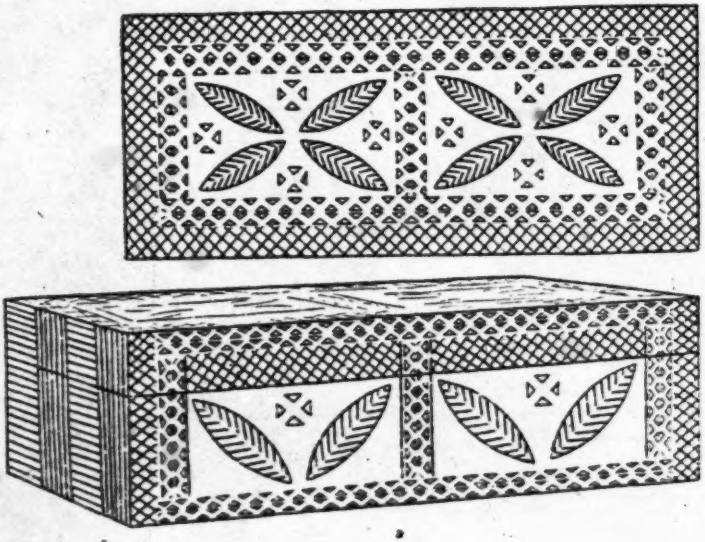

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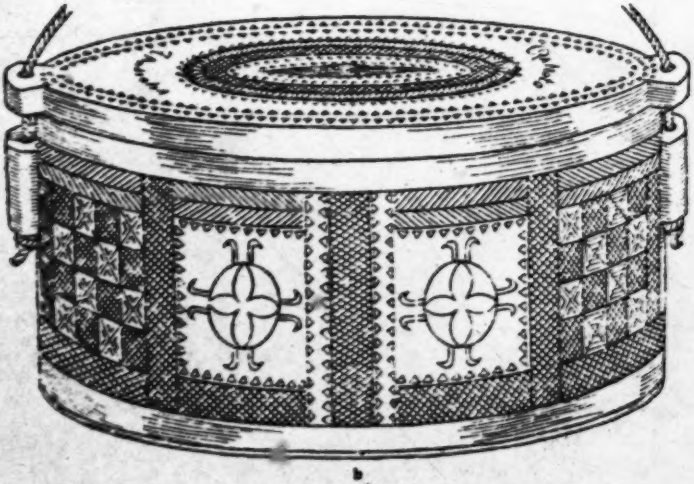

b

FIG. 24. Carved Boxes. a, Modern Box, Side and Lid; b, Old Storage Box.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

322 531 incisions, with none of the wood cut away. When wood is removed, the knife cuts are rectangular in section, with flat bottoms and straight sides.

Deep cuts are made with the chisel or, rarely, the knife. They are commonly in the form of small triangles, as in European chip carving. In making these cuts, the chisel is pressed into the wood vertically on two sides of the triangle and a chip removed by a sloping cut from the third side. The bottom of the cut thus slopes downward from the base of the triangle to its apex. The triangles are always intended to be equilateral. Crescents, ovals and circles are also deeply cut. In these figures, one side of the cut is always vertical and the other sloping. In circles it seems to be a common practice to cut away the interior in such a way as to leave a series of ridges radiating from the center to the circumference.

517 531 The Tanala have no appreciation of the aesthetic value of plain surfaces. The whole of a decorated object will be covered with carving and no large uncarved spaces are left even within designs. This tendency to over-elaboration is carried so far that in curved figures of any size the wide, sloping side of the cut is usually fluted with shallow parallel lines. In arranging the designs, the surface to be decorated is treated as a whole or, if very large, it is divided into a few balanced panels. Unity is maintained by the use of borders. Within the border, the surface is divided into smaller sections of balanced arrangement or, if the main design is curvilinear, it may be treated as a unit. If the area within the border is treated in several sections, these are usually divided off by bands of different design. The designs in each section are selected with regard to the whole pattern, so that good balance is maintained.

The designs are built up by the combination of a few simple elements. Those of most frequent occurrence are various combinations of parallel straight lines including simple parallel lines, arranged either horizontally, vertically or diagonally with regard to the design unit, cross hatching and herringbone patterns. These elements are used mainly in borders and bands between sections of design, but may also be used to fill details of large designs.

Almost as frequent as the parallel line combinations is a series of motifs built up from combinations of small triangles. These include simple toothed lines, zigzags, X-shaped figures and diamonds. These motifs are usually used in bands and borders, but the X figures and diamonds are sometimes employed for fill.